



# NAAFA Newsletter

**Official Publication of the National Association to Advance Fat Acceptance**

**Summer 2008**

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## Mountain

*by Jessica Gagnon, Fat Poets' Society and NAAFA Member*

My body is a mountain --  
Strong and solid and firm.  
I will not be moved  
by your vicious stereotypes.  
I will not be judged  
by your deadly sins.  
I will not be your scapegoat  
for all the world's fears and  
failures.  
Cast your stones upon me,  
But I will not be moved.

## Our Sponsor

An ad for NAAFA's new sponsor, Pambra's, can be found at the end of this newsletter

## Quick Links

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## 2008 NAAFA Convention in Review

*by Peggy Howell, NAAFA Public Relations*

NAAFA's 2008 annual fund raising convention was held in Los Angeles in July of this year and in my opinion was wonderful. This convention was organized by the NAAFA Board of Directors, Los Angeles chapter members, and other key volunteers who all worked very hard to make it extraordinary. From the fun and games in the hospitality suite that opened the convention to the Final Words workshop on Sunday afternoon, this was a very exciting and informative convention.



The workshops were fantastic with presenters from [ASDAH](http://www.sizediversityandhealth.org) (http://www.sizediversityandhealth.org) teaching about Health At Every Size (HAES) and celebrities like [Joy Nash](http://www.myspace.com/joydash) (http://www.myspace.com/joydash) helping us learn to more effectively spread the word of size acceptance through media like You Tube. NAAFA debuted its new website, and had a representative from the American Psychological Association's office in Washington DC who is working to include Health At Every Size into the language of bills and policies as the keynote speaker on Sunday.

NAAFA was invited earlier this year to present to the Health Care Policy Leadership Council of Hewitt Associates, the HR consultants to global Fortune 500 companies. They were so impressed with the presentation that NAAFA has been invited to put together a Diversity Tool Kit for their clients, which is currently in the works. Exciting stuff!

The fantastic Thursday evening Fashion Show was sponsored by [Living XL](http://www.livingxl.com) (http://www.livingxl.com) with celebrity emcee, [Chenese Lewis](http://www.myspace.com/misschenese) (http://www.myspace.com/misschenese). Entertainment was provided by the fabulous Fatimas, the nation's premier fat belly dance troupe and by the superb vocalist and LA chapter member Gael MacGregor.

[Club Catalina](http://www.myspace.com/bbwclubcatalina) of San Diego (http://www.myspace.com/bbwclubcatalina) was the awesome sponsor of the Friday night Tropical Island Dance featuring a Hawaiian theme. We broke out our Hawaiian shirts, dresses, coconut bras and grass skirts and danced the night away! What a great job you and your crew did, Kathy.

Saturday night's Formal Dance was sponsored by Big Daddy Productions, Inc. which organizes [Club Sinsations BBW Dances](http://www.myspace.com/clubsinsations) (http://www.myspace.com/clubsinsations) in both Las Vegas and LA. Since Saturday night is NAAFA's Formal Dinner and Dance, we came dressed in our finest and partied Las Vegas style, baby! Thanks to Chris and Heather for making the night fabulous. (If you visit Las Vegas, you will see me behind the bar at their event!)

Next year is NAAFA's 40th anniversary. We are targeting Washington D.C. for this important celebration. If it weren't for NAAFA, we might not have any of the events that we now enjoy across this country. NAAFA continues to fight for our rights and deserves all our support. It only costs \$15 a year to be a member and you can sign up right on line at the new and improved [NAAFA.org](http://www.naafa.org)

## More Convention Thoughts

by Bill Weitze, NAAFA Newsletter Editor

During Thursday's (July 10) Welcoming Brunch, NAAFA Board of Directors Co-Chair Jason Docherty reaffirmed NAAFA's focus on fighting discrimination against people of size, now that there are other groups such as ASDAH to focus on other issues such as health. To those who don't believe in size discrimination, Yale University's Rudd Center for Food Policy and Obesity published a study in the [March 2008 International Journal of Obesity](#) (<http://www.nature.com/ijo/journal/v32/n6/abs/ijo200822a.html>) showing 40% of those with a body mass index (BMI) of 35 or greater reported experiencing discrimination. (A white paper based on this research is available on [NAAFA's new website](#), <http://naafa.org>)

That night, I modeled clothes for two vendors in the NAAFA Fashion Show that Peggy mentioned. I had only decided to do it the day before, and I was a bit nervous, but I had a great time, and was treated well by all. I would encourage future attendees to participate, especially men: fat guys need great looking clothes, too!

I definitely took advantage of the great workshops that NAAFA and ASDAH had to offer. Ronda Wood led a great belly dancing workshop, and a panel of ASDAH notables presented an extended workshop on the basics of HAES. NAAFA Board members Jason Docherty and Phyllis Warr showed how to start a new chapter, and Jason and others discussed fat men's issues. ASDAH's Deb Burgard and Deb Lemire showed us how to deflect the negative stereotypes that bombard us. Saturday's joint NAAFA/ASDAH luncheon presented talks on legal issues by Sondra Solovay, leader of NAAFA's FLARE legal project, and Paul Campos, NAAFA Board of Advisors member and law professor at the University of Colorado. Thanks to all workshop leaders and speakers for giving of yourselves!

I think that my favorite aspect of the NAAFA Convention is that, for a few days out of the year, I'm surrounded by like-minded people. This is one time when I don't have to listen to diet talk, or how wonderful it is that someone just lost weight. It's a wonderful, supportive village that comes together once a year.

## We Appreciate You!

The NAAFA Board of Directors would like to express our heartfelt thanks to all the people who made our 2008 national convention such a wonderful event.

Special thanks to the Los Angeles NAAFA chapter members for their blood, sweat and tears. Our chapter members spent many hours prior to the convention researching, planning, corresponding, organizing, and so much more. During convention they were workshop presenters and entertainers, coordinated events, ran errands, solicited and organized volunteers, and the list goes on!



Special thanks go out to our sponsors for spectacular convention events. [Living XL](#) (<http://www.livingxl.com>) sponsored our fabulous Fashion Show and so generously provided all our attendees with products from their line of merchandise. [Club Catalina](#) (<http://www.myspace.com/bbwclubcatalina>) from San Diego sponsored our Friday night Tropical Island Dance. [Club Sinsations](#) (<http://www.myspace.com/clubsinsations>) from Las Vegas and Los Angeles sponsored our Saturday Night Formal Dance. Thank you for your generosity and support.

Special thanks to NAAFA and ASDAH members who presented workshops which helped us learn more about ourselves, our bodies and our size acceptance movement.

And special thanks to each of you who attended the NAAFA convention

and continue to support our organization with your generous contributions. Because of you NAAFA continues to work to end discrimination against people of size.

## Let's Make Our Voices Heard!

*by Darliene Howell, NAAFA Member*

There is nothing more important about being an American citizen than making your voice heard by electing representatives. The Presidential race is the ultimate in representation and leadership. For me to make an informed decision in the next election, I went to the websites of the Presidential candidates to look at their policy statements and views on issues that affect me personally. One issue that is very personal to me is size discrimination. Not surprisingly, neither candidate had a statement regarding their stand on size discrimination. In fact, it doesn't appear to be on their radar even though it affects employment, housing, health care, public accommodations and more.

This year can be a life-changing one for people of size in America. Let's make our voices heard. I'm asking all of you, no matter your party affiliation, to contact the Presidential candidates and ask them what their stand is regarding size discrimination. If enough of us do this, they will have to take notice.

It's easy to do! Go to the candidates' websites and send them a message. What we want to see happen is for the anti-discrimination laws to include both height and weight. This issue affects us all. Let's see if we can make it happen. I've already sent my message!

McCain: <http://www.johnmccain.com/Contact/>

Obama: <http://my.barackobama.com/page/s/contact2>

## Share Your Nevada Experiences

Nevada members of NAAFA are working to change the anti-discrimination laws in the State of Nevada to include height and weight. We are asking for your help.

If you are a Nevada resident or have visited Nevada and experienced discrimination due to your size in the areas of employment, housing, or public accommodation (includes restaurants, bars, nightclubs, hotels, motels, casinos, theaters, auditoriums, sports arenas, public transportation, and places of education, etc.), please [contact us](#) at [naafa\\_pr@yahoo.com](mailto:naafa_pr@yahoo.com) and tell us your story. We are looking for people who are willing to tell their story or have their story told in a public arena.

We will keep everyone informed as to what they can do to help make these changes to the laws in Nevada happen. Thanks for your support!

## 1,000 Fat Cranes

*by Marilyn Wann, Fat Rights Agitator*

The 1,000 Fat Cranes project is a response to the Japanese government's decision to measure everyone's waist and fine their employers if the tape reads more than about 34 inches. (Here's the *New York Times* [report on this story](#): <http://tinyurl.com/592at3>)

1,000 Fat Cranes asks the Japanese government: Please end the war on waistslines. Please make peace with people of all sizes.

You're invited to help send 1,000 Fat Cranes flying on a peace mission to Japan. It's easy. Just start folding! (I've set up a [Facebook page](#) <http://www.facebook.com/album.php?aid=143099&l=457eb&id=794535157> with instructions.) Use pre-cut origami paper or make squares from wrapping paper, magazine pages, printouts, or other great stuff you have lying around. Mail your fat cranes to Box 423464 San Francisco CA 94142.

With your help, when we fold 1,000 fat cranes, we'll get our wish: people of all body types enjoying food, fitness, health, happiness, and long life, free from prejudice and discrimination. In Japan and all over the world!

## Review: *Know Fat Chicks* by Lisa Coleman, LPN

reviewed by Bill Weitze

This is mainly a story of two fat women: Gemma, a confident and independent woman who cuts hair in her father's barber shop, and Bertha, whose mother runs a fitness club. After seeing Bertha humiliated by her boyfriend in public, Gemma takes Bertha under her wing and mentors her toward greater self acceptance.

But it's Gemma who takes the longer and stranger journey, as she imagines and helps bring about a world in which fat people are accepted, and the diet industry is exposed as a fraud. I don't want to say any more for fear of giving too much away.

This book is well written, and definitely promotes size acceptance and debunks artificial standards of beauty. My main problem with the book is that there's not enough of it: It's only about 25,000 to 30,000 words, and some characters and relationships are not fully explored. (Of course, when the reader wants more, that's a good problem to have.) The other issue I had is that one important fact is withheld from the reader for a time, and once the fact was revealed I felt misled.

But overall, this is a worthy read.



## Rising Above Prejudice

by [Susan Conklin](#), NAAFA Member  
<http://unapologeticallyfat.blogspot.com>

(Author's Note: This started out as a comment on Fillyjonk's "Ask Aunt Fattie" post at Kate Harding's Shapely Prose blog, [kateharding.net](http://kateharding.net), about a woman who is uncomfortable with the occasional sizist thoughts about her partner's body.)

I wasn't raised to be an accepting person. I was raised with every influence geared towards turning me into a conservative Christian suburbanite WASP. Luckily some of those gears went \*sproing\* in time for me to do something about it, but they still pop up at inopportune moments. I still find a lot of prejudices in me that I have to stop and confront, and a few that get past me without me even noticing until it's too late.

I believe this is an issue for a lot of people in fat acceptance. There was this great tipping point where I suddenly realized that there was *nothing inherently wrong with my body*. A lot of you know what that moment felt like. The problem is that I woke up the next morning buried under all the same old baggage. The only real difference was that I now knew it was there. Part of the self-loathing built into our cultural message is wrapped up in the complete helplessness to find any way to fix what we are told is a problem. The only solutions to our being different, we're told, are to either force our bodies into a semblance of normalcy or, when that inevitably fails, to hide them. We work and slave and sweat in an attempt to solve the "problem" of differentness (to coin a word), with the increasing pressure of shame and guilt heaped on as motivation.

My sudden realization that my body was fine as is didn't remove the pressure. It didn't stop my negative thoughts about my body or other people's bodies. It didn't stop my envying thin friends. It didn't stop the built-in reactions to magazine spreads, fat jokes or diet ads. That's because no moment (or year of moments) can undo the conditioning of a lifetime. All it can do is make me aware enough to start to re-condition myself. I can tell the tiny voices they're being ridiculous, that I don't have to justify my food or clothing choices to anyone. I can start catching the judgmental little part of me that comments on the habits of others,

and tell it to shut the F up. Every time I do, I come a little closer to not believing what they say.

It's a process. I still have to work at it. But those bad moments (and days) when I feel like a mess and stare longingly at the smiling fakery of a Weight Watchers ad don't make me any less a Fat Acceptance activist. Our culture is eerily efficient at creating shame and guilt from natural behaviors like eating, and we don't have to buy into it. The bad moments don't make me a failure; they make me a human being. One that's still learning.

I don't honestly think there will ever be a day when I stop being aware of my differentness, or stop wanting (on some level) to go back to trying to fix it. But when the good moments outnumber the bad, I think I'll call it a win.

## Media and Research Roundup

by Susan Conklin, Lesleigh Owen, and Bill Weitze

[Editor's Note: You'll find the latest size acceptance news, good and bad, at the NAAFA News [RSS Feed](#) at the new <http://naafa.org>]

October 2007: The *American Journal of Medicine* publishes research by Seth Uretsky, MD, of St. Luke's-Roosevelt Hospital showing that heavier than average heart patients have better chances of survival than their average-sized counterparts. Doctors, confused, continue to call for fat people to lose weight.

[http://www.amjmed.com/issues/contents?issue\\_key=S0002-9343\(07\)X1123-9](http://www.amjmed.com/issues/contents?issue_key=S0002-9343(07)X1123-9)

November 2007: Among people with rheumatoid arthritis, joint damage appears to be more severe for those with a normal body mass index (BMI) than for those who are medically "obese", Dr. Gisela Westhoff and associates report in the medical journal *Arthritis and Rheumatism*. Despite these findings, Westhoff's group emphasizes that "obesity still is, as seen in this study, an important source of increased pain, increased functional disability, impaired health, and impaired quality of life in patients with rheumatoid arthritis."

[http://www.rehabpub.com/reuters\\_article.asp?id=20071127clin016.html](http://www.rehabpub.com/reuters_article.asp?id=20071127clin016.html)

December 2007: Heavier patients experience a significant survival benefit from liver transplantation and had similar rates of mortality after transplant compared to average-sized patients, according to research by Shawn Pelletier, MD, of the University of Michigan Medical School and colleagues, published in *Liver Transplantation*. The authors conclude that weight alone should not keep patients from being listed for transplantation.

<http://www3.interscience.wiley.com/journal/117353451/abstract>

December 4, 2007: "Obesity Blamed as More Mothers Die in Childbirth." This is only one of the headlines resulting from the media blitz following the release of *Saving Mothers' Lives*, a UK government report. In fact, as Sandy Szwarc reports in her Junkfood Science blog, fat women are no more likely to die in childbirth; the report notes that 51% of women who died in childbirth were "overweight" or "obese," while Britain classifies 54.8% of women of childbearing age thusly. It is another sad case of a tragedy becoming false fodder for the increasingly deadly war on fat.

[http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/life\\_and\\_style/health/article2994602.ece](http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/life_and_style/health/article2994602.ece)  
<http://junkfoodscience.blogspot.com/2007/12/reality-check-saving-mothers-lives.html>

December 5, 2007: Stephen Blair, PED, and other researchers at the University of South Carolina find that fitness, defined here as the ability to perform moderate to high intensity physical activity for a sustained period, was a strong predictor of life expectancy irrespective of weight. The association between all measures of fatness (BMI, percent body fat, waist circumference) disappeared after correction for fitness level, according to the research, which was published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA)*.

<http://jama.ama-assn.org/cgi/content/abstract/298/21/2507>

December 6, 2007: Three articles in the *New England Journal of Medicine* present the opinion that the increase in the number of fat

children will lead to reduction in life expectancy, even though over 30 years of this trend has not led to any such thing. A telling sound bite (thanks PegE): "Like global warming, the obesity epidemic is a looming crisis that requires action before all the scientific evidence is in."

<http://content.nejm.org/content/vol357/issue23/index.shtml>

December 10, 2007: Two Purdue University sociology department studies published in the *Journal of Health and Social Behavior* and *Archives of Internal Medicine* show longer hospital stays and more avoidable trips to the hospital for the "obese". However, the study did not try to determine the causes, which may not be any inherent problem with fatness but rather doctors who are unfamiliar with the special needs of fat patients, or lack of access to health care other than in the emergency room.

December 10, 2007: University of Michigan researchers report the results of an Internet poll showing a discrepancy between medical definitions of "obesity" and parents' more positive and inclusive labels and conceptions of their children. When parents and researchers disagree, whom should we consider correct? The headline of the subsequent Associated Press article says it all: "Many Parents of Fat Kids in Denial, Study Finds."

<http://www.med.umich.edu/opm/newspage/2007/poll6.htm>

<http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/22391071/>

December 12, 2007: An Associated Press article reports that, "For the first time in nearly 50 years, the average cholesterol level for U.S. adults is in the ideal range." Cholesterol rates have dropped 23 points since 1960. Article writer Mike Stobbe speculates this to be because of the "explosion" of cholesterol medication. Could it also be that fat folks are not the ticking time bombs of ill-health that the media claim? Cholesterol-free food for thought!

<http://www.newsvine.com/news/2007/12/12/1158702-us-cholesterol-average-is-ideal-at-199>

December 13, 2007: What is the single most important issue defining the character and quality of our presidential candidates? Why, their waistlines, of course! In her article for the *Huffington Post*, Ariana Huffington poses the rather disturbing question, "Have we gotten to the point in our looks-obsessed culture where a svelte waistline is a prerequisite for higher office and a double chin an automatic disqualifier?"

[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/arianna-huffington/hey-good-lookin-the-ri\\_b\\_76651.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/arianna-huffington/hey-good-lookin-the-ri_b_76651.html)

December 16, 2007: In an opinion piece in the *San Francisco Chronicle*, author Richard Torregrossa writes, "More and more I find myself admiring fat people." Hooray! It turns out, he saw a fat woman jogging, and as he puts it, "I saw how hard at least one woman worked to lose weight, and my perceptions about fat people changed forever." Hoo--- What? First, Richard, don't assume that that's why she was jogging. Second, fat people don't need the type of "acceptance" that requires us to hate being fat.

<http://www.sfisonline.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/c/a/2007/12/16/IN2HTOV30.DTL>

December 18, 2007: UT Southwestern Medical Center researchers report "that some morbidly obese patients have better cardiovascular disease risk profiles than those who are less obese." As a result, the scientists now realize that fatness isn't the death sentence everyone claims, right? Wrong! Clearly, the implication is that we should expand the BMI criteria for bariatric surgery to include thinner fat persons as candidates. As a NAAFA member commented, "Wow. This is an amazing example of tortured logic."

<http://www.newswise.com/articles/view/536296/>

December 19, 2007: The title of this Associated Press article ("Very Obese Less Likely to Get Kidney Transplant") is chilling enough without reading some of the statistics: Very fat persons are 44% less likely to get a transplant than average-weight persons, and when fat folks do score a kidney, they must wait 12-18 months longer than average. The implications are sobering; one NAAFA member commented that a friend of hers was forced by her doctors to have bariatric surgery before they would even consider her for a kidney transplant.

<http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/22330384/>

December 2007: Those who are not necessarily fans of game shows

might enjoy watching our very own Linda Ramos, President of the Los Angeles Chapter of NAAFA, on Fox's *Moment of Truth* when she asks a contestant, "Do fat people disgust you?" Hands on hips, sassy as ever, Ramos stares the contestant in the eyes when posing this very socially relevant question. Ramos reports she provided a plug for NAAFA during her brief appearance that she hopes won't end up "on the cutting room floor." (Unfortunately, it did.)

January 1, 2008: Amid the New Year's diet hype, two articles point out the clear benefits of moderate exercise. The *Akron Beacon Journal* references many studies showing the benefits of just 20 to 30 minutes of walking per day: lower risk of diabetes, heart disease, and stroke. And an article at NewScientist.com (published January 8) says that four healthy behaviors may add 14 years to your life, based on research by Kay-Tee Khaw and colleagues at Cambridge University, and published in *PLoS Medicine*. And the behaviors (not smoking, exercising, eating fruits and vegetables, and drinking alcohol moderately) do so even if you're fat.  
<http://www.ohio.com/lifestyle/health/12953307.html>  
<http://www.newscientist.com/channel/health/dn13154-new-year-resolutions-could-add-years-to-your-life.html>

January 4, 2008: The *Lifetime* network premieres the US version of *How to Look Good Naked*, which, surprisingly, promotes self acceptance and positive body image for people of all sizes. Says nurse, aerobics instructor, and size acceptance advocate Sandy Dixon of [www.abundia.org](http://www.abundia.org), "It was amazing to watch. I think we are making a difference."  
<http://www.mylifetime.com>

January 2008: Clinical social worker and NAAFA advisor Barbara Altman Bruno, PhD, has a letter to the editor published in *American Journal of Psychiatry*, in response to a May 2007 editorial proposing that "obesity" be classified as a brain disorder. "We should advocate for people taking good care of themselves via such avenues as self- and size-acceptance, enjoyable movement, and nourishment of one's body, soul, and relationships," says Bruno.  
<http://ajp.psychiatryonline.org/cgi/content/full/165/1/138>

January 10, 2008: Canadian airlines are ordered by their government to stop charging extra to disabled passengers who need an extra seat. While press reports interpret "disabled" as including fat people who cannot fit into one seat, it is unclear whether the ruling applies to fat folk who are not disabled.  
<http://www.upgradetravelbetter.com/2008/01/13/canada-prohibits-airlines-from-charging-overweight-passengers-for-an-extra-seat/>

January 11, 2008: The *Hartford Courant* runs an article partly questioning the accuracy of Body Mass Index (BMI) in predicting disease and death. Although strongly anti-fat, the article does mention Health at Every Size (HAES) advocates like Paul Campos, Jon Robison, and J. Eric Oliver.  
[http://www.micromedex.com/pressroom/news\\_feeds/?story\\_id=150494&category=10](http://www.micromedex.com/pressroom/news_feeds/?story_id=150494&category=10)

January 16, 2008: Researchers at the Monell Chemical Senses Center report in the online journal *BMC Central* that roughly 6000 genes, about a quarter of the genome, help determine body weight. This makes doubtful any quick genetic "solution" to fatness.  
<http://news.biocompare.com/newsstory.asp?id=211676>

January 18, 2008: Cable network MTV debuts "True Life: I'm Happy to be Fat", which profiles three people who are happy being fat: Sharonda, who is happier as a fatter woman; Mikey, who embraces weighing 476 pounds and is looking for a mate in the gay community; and Roxie, who is starting a Body Beautiful Project on her college campus.  
<http://www.springfieldnewssun.com/hp/content/oh/story/news/local/2008/01/17/sns011808mtv.html>  
<http://www.mtv.com/overdrive/?id=1579759&vid=204219>

January 20, 2008: The *Independent* (UK) reports that an anti-fatness charity, The Obesity Awareness and Solutions Trust (Toast), that took tens of thousands of pounds of UK taxpayer money is actually a front for a highly profitable diet company. Members of Parliament quickly distance themselves from the trust. By contrast, in the US, the weight loss industry legally and successfully lobbies the government every day for

large grants and government programs that build up their bottom line.  
<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/mps-conned-over-obesity-charity-that-was-front-for-diet-firm-771266.html>

January 22, 2008: The *New York Times* profiles fat acceptance-related blogs such as Big Fat Deal, FatChicksRule (by author and NAAFA member Lara Frater), Fatgrrl, and Kate Harding's Shapely Prose. These blogs are helping bring the fat acceptance message to a new audience. The story is picked up by other media outlets.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2008/01/22/health/22fblogs.html>  
<http://abcnews.go.com/Technology/OnCall/story?id=4173879&page=1>

January 23, 2008: Good news: The American Heart Association reports that heart disease deaths in the US have fallen below the year 2010 goal, and deaths from strokes are nearing their own record low. Noting that this occurred without any reduction in the fatness of Americans, the AHA concludes that fatness is still bad even in the face of the evidence.

[http://www.usatoday.com/news/health/2008-01-22-heart-disease\\_N.htm](http://www.usatoday.com/news/health/2008-01-22-heart-disease_N.htm)

January 29, 2008: The *Washington Post* publishes an article whose subtitle says it all: "Doctors Too Quick to Blame Obese Patients' Ills on Fat, Studies Suggest". Members of the Capital chapter of NAAFA are profiled.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/story/2008/01/28/ST2008012801777.html>

January 30, 2008: An opinion piece in the *Rocky Mountain News* by author, law professor, and NAAFA advisor Paul Campos takes on the complicated issues of fatness and hunger among the poor. Well done.

<http://www.rockymountainnews.com/news/2008/jan/30/campos-millions-going-hungry/>

January 31, 2008: Research published in the March 2008 *American Journal of Public Health* shows that "The obesity 'epidemic' might have a lot more to do with our collective preoccupation with obesity than obesity itself," says the study's lead author, Dr. Peter Muennig of Columbia University in New York City. The study of a nationally representative group of more than 170,000 US adults found that the difference between actual weight and perceived ideal weight was a better indicator of mental and physical health than body mass index (BMI).

<http://www.reuters.com/article/healthNews/idUKTON07906120080130>  
<http://www.ajph.org/cgi/content/abstract/98/3/501>

January/February 2008: In an excerpt from *Gastronomica* published in the *Utne Reader*, Julie Guthman tackles another wave of problematic assumptions as to why fat people exist. The article takes on Michael Pollan's conclusion that corn is responsible for "The Obesity Epidemic" in his book *The Omnivore's Dilemma: A Natural History of Four Meals*. Guthman puts the book in context with Fat Acceptance books by J. Eric Oliver, Paul Campos and others.

<http://www.utne.com/2008-01-01/Politics/The-Food-Police.aspx>

January/February 2008: An article in the *Utne Reader* by Hannah Lobel titled "Shame on US How an obsession with obesity turned fat into a moral failing" examines our new culture of body hatred and anti-fat rhetoric as shown by ads, public campaigns and the media's obsession with fatness.

<http://www.utne.com/2008-01-01/Politics/Shame-on-US.aspx>

February 2008: Actress Camryn Manheim, who so memorably accepted her Emmy award with a cry of "This is for all the fat girls" now campaigns for weight loss. An advertising supplement to a news magazine now quotes her as saying "I am a proponent of self-acceptance, but I am not a proponent of fat acceptance." She drags out the old health issue as her justification; apparently she's never heard of Health at Every Size.

February 2, 2008: TMZ includes a piece on Wyclef Jean, who asked for 30 girls to join him on stage during a concert in Scottsdale, Arizona, but announced that the invitation only included girls who weighed under 200 pounds.

<http://www.tmz.com/2008/02/02/wyclef-jean-please-no-fatties>

February 3, 2008: In the *San Francisco Chronicle*, Steve Knipp offers a somewhat hostile article on fat travel titled "How can we travel light when



we weigh so much more?" The article wanders from a recommendation to visit the Kingdom of Tonga (in order to feel thin by comparison to the islands' residents) to the story of a fat theme-park visitor who was injured when he could not lower the safety bar of a roller coaster. The writer quotes NAAFA's website in a section discussing whether fat travelers should be charged more to fly.

<http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/c/a/2008/02/01/TRL2U9KNS.DTL>

February 3, 2008: A NAAFA press release speaks out against Mississippi House Bill 282, which would have made it illegal for restaurants to serve fat people under penalty of fines and/or closure of the restaurant. Two days later, the chairman of the Mississippi House Public Health and Human Services Committee announced he would kill the bill.

February 5, 2008: An article published in *PloS Medicine* presents data by Dutch researchers showing that lifetime health care expenditures for the "obese" were actually lower than those for people of lower BMI. The study concludes that reducing obesity levels would not lower public health care costs.

<http://medicine.plosjournals.org/perlserv/?request=get-document&doi=10.1371/journal.pmed.0050029&ct=1>

February 6, 2008: In the *Augusta Chronicle*, an editorial criticizes the bill introduced in the Mississippi House of Representatives that would have made it illegal to serve fat people in Mississippi restaurants. It goes on, however to criticize NAAFA and the concept of Fat Acceptance citing the usual misconceptions about fat, claiming it's only a matter of "turning down that third piece of pie and exercising more."

[http://chronicle.augusta.com/stories/020608/edi\\_186277.shtm](http://chronicle.augusta.com/stories/020608/edi_186277.shtm)

February 7, 2008: The BBC news reports on a University College London study that showed that at least 77% of an individual's Body Mass Index and waist size is controlled by genes rather than lifestyle. Researchers examined more than 5,000 identical and non-identical twins as part of the study, which was published in the *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/health/7230065.stm>

February 7, 2008: "Diabetes Study Partially Halted After Deaths." A *New York Times* article by Gina Kolata reveals that methods used in a study to lower blood sugar levels in people with diabetes close to the normal range actually resulted in a significantly higher death risk, contrary to assumptions that low blood sugar is automatically better for diabetics. A follow up from Tara Parker-Pope the next day looks at possible reasons for the increased deaths, and speculates whether these results will have any effect on diabetes treatment.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2008/02/07/health/07diabetes.html>

<http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9904E7DC1339F93BA35751C0A96E9C8B63>

<http://www.accordtrial.org/web/public/documents/Protocol%20All%20Chapters.pdf>

A response to the study's unexpected results from the American Diabetes Association can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/37u7ee>

February 8, 2008: The US Federal Trade Commission charges Medlab, Inc., and related companies with violating federal law in claims made about their weight loss pill, marketed under several names in the U.S. including Zyladex Plus, Quesstral AC, Quesstral AC Fat Killer Plus, Rapid Loss 245, and Rapid Loss Rx.

<http://www.ftc.gov/opa/2008/02/zyladex.shtm>

February 8, 2008: NAAFA Public Relations Director Peggy Howell and Big Fat Blog owner Paul McAleer are featured in an Associated Press article on the lack of seat belt extenders for some cars.

<http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/23070762/>

February 14, 2008: A Slate.com article by Daniel Engber disputes claims by presidential candidates that lowering fatness rates would reduce health care spending in the U.S. Referencing recent studies in the Public Library of Science and the American Journal of Public Health (see above), Engber tackles the common and mistaken assumptions that fat people represent increased costs to society. He also calls for a federal ban on weight-based discrimination.

<http://www.slate.com/id/2184475>

February 18, 2008: Big bottoms are back on top. A new dance craze in the African nation of Ivory Coast is creating a black market for dubious products claiming to increase the size of women's behinds. According to a BBC news article by John James, the song "Bobaraba" ("big bottom") by DJ Mix and DJ Elo has sparked the craze, while health officials are concerned that the black market injections and creams sold to increase the size of the behind are unregulated, and could contain harmful ingredients or additives.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/7233565.stm>

February 19, 2008: A class action lawsuit has been filed against the makers of Akavar 20/50 for fraud and racketeering in their claims regarding the weight loss drug. The suit names Utah-based Basic Research, LLC, and related companies and individuals as defendants.

[http://www.casewatch.org/civil/akavar\\_complaint.shtml](http://www.casewatch.org/civil/akavar_complaint.shtml)

February 22, 2008: Actress Emma Thompson put her foot down against Miramax Films when they asked her co-star Hayley Atwell to lose weight for her role in the upcoming film remake *Brideshead Revisited*. When Thompson found out that Atwell was dieting at the request of the studio, she threatened to quit unless they withdrew the request. The producers gave in to Thompson's demand.

<http://www.thefirstpost.co.uk/people,704,brit-actress-saved-by-outraged-emma,18324>

February 27, 2008: An article in the *Herald Sun* (Australia) reveals the many complications and life-threatening health risks following lap-band surgery. The article features the story of a 38 year old mother of three who went through three surgeries and 11 days in intensive care to repair a perforated stomach and other damage caused by the lap band. Sandy Swarc comments on the article in her Junkfood Science blog, and quotes additional sources on the high rate of failure, death and disability related to lap-band surgery.

<http://www.news.com.au/heraldsun/story/0,21985,23287759-661,00.html>

<http://junkfoodscience.blogspot.com/2008/02/they-didnt-want-surgery-but-believed-it.html>

February 27, 2008: In an opinion piece for the *Rocky Mountain News*, our own Paul Campos talks about a society that teaches girls to hate their bodies, distorts the idea of feminine beauty, and promotes self-destructive behavior to achieve an impossible ideal. He includes stories of women and girls who have been victims of this cultural pressure.

<http://www.rockymountainnews.com/news/2008/feb/27/campos-the-weight-of-a-cruel-culture/>



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